



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

Sh

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/790,329	03/01/2004	Kevin T. Foley	4002-3486/PC746.02	9011

7590 12/09/2004

Woodard, Emhardt, Moriarty, McNett & Henry LLP
Bank One Center/Tower
Suite 3700
111 Monument Circle
Indianapolis, IN 46204-5137

EXAMINER

SWEET, THOMAS

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3738

DATE MAILED: 12/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

45

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/790,329	Applicant(s) FOLEY, KEVIN T.	
	Examiner Thomas J Sweet	Art Unit 3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 44-47 and 50-80 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 44,47 and 60-80 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 45,46 and 50-59 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>03/01/2004</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 47, 60-80 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant uses an "if, then" procedure in claiming the invention which is open ended and therefore the scope of the claims can not be discerned. An "if, then, else" procedure encompassing the entire procedure is necessary to determine scope of the claim. See the 35 U.S.C. 102 rejection of claim 47 below for further explanation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 44, 47, 60-66 and 70-78 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ralph et al (US 6471725). Ralph et al discloses a method (abstract) for inserting an intervertebral implant, comprising: accessing a collapsed spinal disc space (uni-portal, Col 3, lines 8-28); sequentially inserting and removing a number of implants into the collapsed spinal

Art Unit: 3738

disc space (abstract), each of said implants providing a different restored disc space height when inserted in the disc space, the spinal disc space at least partially collapsing when the inserted implant is removed therefrom (inherent); and leaving in the spinal disc space the implant (inserting the porous spacer from the last line of the abstract meets this step under broadest reasonable interpretation since it is the same size as the appropriate trial implant) from the number of implants providing a restored disc space height corresponding to a desired disc space height to post-operatively maintain the desired disc space height.

In the broadest reasonable interpretation of the claim 47, Ralph et al meets this method since the "if then" procedure is open ended when the first implant is the correct height. When the first trial implant of Ralph et al is the correct height it would be replaced with the second porous implant also of the correct height and would be left inserted to post-operatively maintain the spacing. Additionally, when neither the first or second implant are of proper height the procedure is identical for both the applicants procedure and Ralph et al procedure.

With regard to claims 61 and 70-72, for an appropriate disc height of 3-6 mm (3-4 for flat implants and 5-6 for angular implants of Ralph et al) as determined by surgical experience, when first trial implant of Ralph et al is the correct height it would be replaced with the second porous implant also of the correct height and would be left inserted to post-operatively maintain the spacing and would have a nose portion of 3-4 mm.

With regard to claims 62-65 and 70-76, the rounded and angular embodiment of Ralph et al (fig. 4d).

With regard to claims 67 and 78, See figure 5b and the corresponding text in Columns 14-15.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 45-46 and 50-59 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Bagga et al. (2003/0125739), Ralph et al. (6,562,047), Ralph et al. (6,428,544), Ralph et al. (6,447,548), Ray, Charles D. (6,042,582), Branch et al. (6,610,065), Branch et al. (6,174,311), Zucherman et al. (2004/0193159), Paul et al. (2001/0049560), Sato et al. (2004/0102847), Liu et al. (2004/0106996) and Zucherman et al. (2004/0162617).

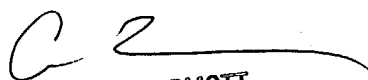
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas J Sweet whose telephone number is 571-272-4761. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 am - 5:00pm, M-Th.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine M McDermott can be reached on 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3738

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

tjs


CORRINE McDERMOTT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700